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Endowments that capricious fortune brings,  
 By her disfranchisements are set aside,  
 The mistress she alike of slaves and kings,  
 Empress of Earth's dominions, far and wide,  
 Eldest of Potentates, and latest born,  
 Of all in Heaven above, or Earth below !  
 No being so illustrious or forlorn,  
 That to Love's sceptre doth not gladly bow.

January, 1880.

A. BRONSON ALCOTT.

### SENTENCES IN PROSE AND VERSE.

SELECTION BY W. E. CHANNING.

A man does not value the Creator so much here ; he thinks of the created. Here falls the crown of humanity upon his head in its circle of beauty, suffering, and uncertainty. The speechless air, the deaf earth, the blindness of substance—what do they but render us back vagueness for vagueness ? Why was Christ tempted on a mount ? Not because he could see therefrom the kingdoms of the earth.—*Elizabeth Stoddard.*

In civilized epochs men write histories ; in barbarous ages they act them.—*Michelet.*

With what thoughts in his own lofty, opaque mind ; like a crowned mule, of such pace and carriage, who had unexpectedly stepped on galvanic wires.—*Carlyle.*

Darkness is the dead Earth's Shadow.—*Ibid.*

O for the spirit of that matchless man,  
 Whom nature led throughout her whole domain,  
 While he embodied breath'd ethereal air.—*Landor.*

His unshorn hair, grown soft in these abodes,  
 Waved back, and scattered thin and hoary light.—*Ibid.*

Whose hills  
 Touch the last cloud upon the level sky.—*Ibid.*

Fallen, unpitied, unbelieved, unloved,  
 I should have died long earlier.—*Ibid.*

Surely no air is stirring ; every step  
 Tires me ; the columns shake, the ceiling fleets,  
 The floor beneath me slopes, the altar rises.—*Ibid.*

What almanac can calculate fine weather  
 In those strange fickle regions where God plants  
 A man and woman, and sticks love between.—*Ibid*

What we love  
Is loveliest in departure.—*Ibid.*

The least syllable too long, or too slightly dwelt upon in a period, depreciates it to nothing, which very syllable, if rightly touched, shall, like the heightening stroke of light from a master's pencil, give life and spirit to the whole.—*Colley Cibber.*

The twentieth part of a tone lower or higher, and it sounds false. The actor had listened long for it, before he says, "Zaire, you weep," and it is because he listens when he seems agitated, and because his sole talent consists, not in feeling as you think, but to counterfeit thus scrupulously the external signs of feeling, that you are therein deceived.—*Diderot.*

I was the person himself, not the actor playing the part, as natural as if I had been acting alone. *L'optique du théâtre* is based on other laws.—*Molé.*

Acting should be absolutely art; all in it needs to be foreseen and calculated; the sudden seeming movement, the pang so involuntary, tone and gesture and look deemed all inspiration, have been rehearsed hundreds of times. Emotion spoils the effect, the voice hesitates, memory fails, gesture is false, and the end lost sight of.—*Talma.*

The stiffen-bodied gown would not add charms, I believe, to a beautiful woman, no more than Voltaire's laboured turns of expression add to his stile.—*Lady Luxboro* [1748].

Permit me to interrupt what I am saying with a curse against crows. How much more friendly are the geese!—*Ibid.*

Pope would have died many years ago had he been obliged to refrain from satire, the sole delight of his peevish little temper.—*Ibid.*

A woman may be privileged to swerve from such rules as she may be supposed not to understand.—*Ibid.*

The great Handel has told me that the hints of his very best songs have several of them been owing to the sounds in his ears of cries in the streets.—*Ibid.*

Those persons who cannot find pleasure in trifles are generally wise in their own opinions, and fools in the opinions of the wise.—*Ibid.*

When my brother Bolingbroke built Dawley, which he chose to call a Farm, he had his hall painted in stone-colors with all the implements of husbandry, placed in the manner one sees or might see arms and trophies in some general's hall.—*Ibid.*

At last I am in the fashion, and have got a Pantin (jumping-Jack). There is a party of ladies and gentlemen at Vauxhall. The ladies crow

like cocks, and if any of the gentlemen of the party are within hearing, they answer them by braying like an ass.—*Ibid.*

I cannot tell who wrote the verses in a Country Church-yard, but I like them well, and think all the first part of the Elegy very beautiful. I cannot see why it did not end at the most beautiful line in it.—*Ibid.*

"He was a worthy man and an open enemy" [the King on Sir Wal-kin's death].—*Ibid.*

Contrary to custom, I was not alone, having Mr. and Mrs. Holyoak eating a barrel of oysters with me; after which we supped.—*Ibid.*

My wife's name was Ensor, whose grandmother was a Shakespeare, descended from the brother of *everybody's* Shakespeare.—*Dyer* [the poet].

'Tis the general maxim of all our colleges to choose a man of manage-ment for their head rather than a man of letters.—*Legrís* [in France].

The effect of distant waves breaking heavily was such as you could imagine the sound of a giant might be who, coming back from travel unto some smooth and level and still and solitary place with all his armor and all his spoils about him, casts himself slumberously down to rest.—*Landor.*

Par l'éclat d'une fardeau trop pesant à porter (Boileau). I never heard until now that a *fardeau* could have an éclat.—*Ibid.*

Those whose hearts possess the rarest and divinest faculty of retaining or forgetting at option what ought to be forgotten or retained.—*Ibid.*

It seems a part of the rock, it has such deep crevices and chinks in it, and so much gray moss, hard as itself, about it. With all its twist-ings and writhings it can not keep its ragged coat right around it; but one patch gapes here, another there, and much has fallen in tatters at its feet. Wonderful, then, it should have the prettiest leaves and branches in the world, with a motion as graceful as a peacock's.—*Ibid* [a birch-tree].

I always feel a kind of average between myself and any other person I am talking with—between us two I mean.—*Lady Ashburton.*

I have seen

A pine in Italy that casts its shadow  
Athwart a cataract; firm stood the pine,  
The cataract shook the shadow.—*Tennyson.*

O Saint of Aragon! with that sweet worn smile  
Among thy patient wrinkles.—*Ibid.*

There runs a shallow brook across our field  
For twenty miles, where the black crow flies five,  
And doth so bound and babble all the way  
As if itself were happy.—*Ibid.*

Our altar is a mound of dead men's clay,  
Dug from the grave that yawns for us beyond.—*Ibid.*  
The serpent that hath slough'd will slough again.—*Ibid.*

They are not sweet,  
The violence and the craft that do divide  
The world of nature; what is weak must lie.—*Ibid.*  
Thine is a half-voice and a lean assent.—*Ibid.*

I am nearly through Xenophon [a picture], but with not a shilling for the winter, and my children literally in want of stockings for the cold.—*Haydon.*

Completed Adam and Eve. Now for Satan on Monday, with only 1s. 6d. in my pocket, huzza!—*Ibid.*

To read Milton, Tasso, and Shakespeare in grassy nooks by the rippling sea, to unbind her hair and watch her fastening it with her ivory arms bent back over her head.—*Ibid.*

I saw it was only necessary for the Duke's system to come in contact with Napoleon's to split it.—*Ibid.*

Old Bone, the enamel painter, who has got a nervous twitch and a croaking voice, as if he was always watching a bit of ivory in a furnace for fear it should crack.—*Ibid.*

I was so long without speaking to a human creature that my gums became painfully sore from the clenched tightness of my teeth.—*Ibid.*

A star is always shining in my brain, which has always led me on, and ever will.—*Ibid.*

I read seventeen hours a day on Clarissa Harlowe, and held the book so long up, leaning on my elbows as an arm-chair, that I stopped the circulation and could not move.—*Ibid.*

I wrote a pamphlet directly which everybody praised and nobody bought.—*Ibid.*

A man who has a fixed purpose to which he devotes his power is invulnerable. Like the rock in the sea, it splits the troubles of life as they eddy around him in idle foam.—*Ibid.*

What is known comes not by its own power, but from the power of him who knows.—*Boethius.*

Here lies Sylvius, who never gave anything *gratis* ; he is dead, yet will he weep that any one can read this *gratis*.—*Buchanan*.

Small matters amuse most in the country.—*Colley Cibber*.

I have sent you by *Vacandary* the Post, the French Bever, and Tweeters you writ for ; Bever-hats have grown dearer of late, because the Jesuits have got the Monopoly of them from the King.—*Howell*.

My Lord Chancellor *Bacon* is lately dead of a long languishing weakness ; he died so poor that he scarcely left money to bury him, which, tho' he had a great Wit, did argue no great Wisdom, it being one of the essential Properties of a wise Man to provide for the main chance.—*Ibid*.

I love not those *viscosa beneficia*, those bird-lim'd Kindnesses which Pliny speaks of ; nor would I receive Money in a dirty Clout if possibly I could be without it.—*Ibid*.

I find it true now that one of the greatest tortures that can be in the negotiation of the World is to have to do with perverse, irrational, half-witted men, and to be worded to death by nonsense.—*Ibid*.

'Twas a brave, generous saying of a great Armenian Merchant, who, having understood how a Vessel of his was cast away wherein there was laden a rich Cargason on his sole Account, struck his hand on his breast and said, "My Heart, I thank God, is still afloat ; my Spirits shall not sink with the Ship, nor go an Inch lower."—*Ibid*.

An actor's standing among the Romans was infamous, but honorable with the Greeks. How is it now ? We think of them like Romans, and live with them like Greeks.—*La Bruyère*.<sup>1</sup>

It needs little depth of mind to form polite manners, but much to acquire right perceptions.—*Ibid*.

The rule of Descartes, that no one should try to answer the least question before clearly understanding what it is, may be wisely used in our judgment of persona.—*Ibid*.

Some men possess a degree of mental mediocrity which serves to make them appear wise.—*Ibid*.

One sign of mediocrity is to be always telling anecdotes.—*Ibid*.

Between good sense and good taste there is the same difference as between cause and effect.—*Ibid*.

We approve of others chiefly from the likeness they possess to ourselves, and if we wish greatly to esteem a person we need only to consider him our equal.—*Ibid*.

<sup>1</sup> Translation by W. E. C.